

Tale Feathers

October
2006

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Hawks Up Close: A Movie

Tuesday, October 17th

Do you know what an osprey sounds like? Do you know which falcon is North America's largest? Have you ever seen the courtship display of swallow-tailed kites? From merlin to gyrfalcon, broad-winged to zone-tailed and kestrel to snail kite, this movie celebrates the 30 species of hawks that call North America home.

The documentary, written by Kenn Kaufman, describes their habitat and habits and includes many amazing images. Beginning with a description of the raptor groups (buteo, accipiter, etc.) the film introduces each of the species and uses them to highlight various aspects of hawk physiology or behavior. It continues by briefly highlighting raptor conservation thru two different projects. Finally, the film concludes with stunning footage of hawk migration along the East coast. A joint production of the National Audubon Society and the Nature Science Network, it is a must for anyone who is fascinated by these marvels of the sky.

Join us at 7:30 p.m. at the Powder Valley Nature Center to enjoy this wonderful film. Running time is 55 minutes and will be preceded by a few Society announcements. Please bring a friend as the show is free to all. Better still we will be joined by volunteers from the **World Bird Sanctuary with two species of hawks native to Missouri.**

From the intersection of Interstates 44 & 270, take Watson Rd. to Geyer Rd. Turn north on Geyer for 200 yds. to Cragwold Rd. Go west on Cragwold for 1 mi. to nature center entrance on right. Follow drive to parking lot. Enter building through left entrance and proceed to the auditorium.

Questions, call Mitch Leachman at 314-739-5112.

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St. Louis Audubon Society

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Mission Statement
of
The St. Louis
Audubon Society

Help our community
sustain biological
Diversity through
Nature.

Goals
To foster an aware-
ness and under-
standing
of birds and other
wildlife and their
habitats

To educate our com-
munity so people
can make
informed decisions
about the natural
world.

Mark your calendars! Forest Park Kennedy Woods Annual Honeysuckle Cut

Saturday, November 11

We've had tremendous success in helping to restore the understory in the Kennedy Woods of Forest Park (a designated Important Bird Area) with our annual honeysuckle cut. The date for this year's honeysuckle cut has been set for Saturday, November 11, with a rain date of Saturday, November 18. Note that it's a Saturday this year, instead of Sunday. Come for the morning shift from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. or the afternoon shift from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Bring loppers and gloves; the Round-up and paintbrushes will be provided. We also may do some tree-planting in the p.m. shift, so bring a shovel. Meet at the Kennedy Woods trailhead pavilion in the circle drive off of Wells Drive (west of the zoo hospital) at 9 a.m., and we may caravan to another site for the a.m. shift. The p.m. shift will also meet at the Kennedy Woods trailhead pavilion.

-Susan Gustafson-Forest Park Advisory Group

Birding trip for beginning birders.

John Solodar

Our recent member survey turned up the fact that a number of people would like to have birding trips that are just for beginners. As a result we have arranged to have three such trips during the current season. The first of these is set for November 18 at Busch Conservation Area in St. Charles County. Although a trip for more experienced birders is occurring that day also, we will split up so that the beginners have their own group and we'll go our own way. We'll include a discussion of binocular types and how to use them properly. We'll also concentrate on the easier to see birds such as the different ducks and some of the gulls which should be present. Plenty of attention will be paid to looking for the correct field marks that we use for proper identification.

The trip will start at 8:00 AM in the Hampton Lake parking lot and will not go past noon. If you have to leave early, that's OK. There is no charge and you may bring along friends even if they are not members of SLAS. Bring binoculars if you have them. We will hope to have some to borrow for those that do not have their own, but your own will probably be of better quality. Directions are given elsewhere in this newsletter under the list of October and November trips. For more information call John Solodar at 314-862-5294 or e-mail him at solodar@sbcglobal.net.

www.stlouisaudubon.org

Birding Trips October and November

John Solodar

October 14, Saturday Two

Rivers/Riverlands/Confluence. This trip is structured for flexibility. The leader, Mike Thelen, will be going all day and you are invited to be there with him. However, if you are inclined to do only part of the trip you can do that easily as well. We'll start at 8:00 AM at the Gilbert Lake parking lot just north of the Brussels Ferry in Illinois. Bring your lunch as there is a good chance of eating on the porch at the Two Rivers Headquarters building while watching the pond below and the lake in the distance.

October 25, Wednesday Busch Conservation

Area/Weldon Springs This will be the first of our new Wednesday birding trips to accommodate those who like weekday birding. Pat Lueders will be our leader and the trip will start at 8:00 AM. There will be lots of fall migrants to see in the Busch/Weldon Spring area and the weather should be ideal at this time of year.

November 4, Saturday Horseshoe Lake area Paul Bauer will lead this trip to Horseshoe Lake and some surrounding areas. We'll hope to find various ducks, gulls, wintering sparrows and whatever else may be coming through. We'll start at 8:00 AM for this half day trip.

November 18, Saturday Busch/Weldon Spring

This is a dual purpose trip as we are offering a special trip within the trip for beginners. The more experienced part of the group will conduct a regular bird walk with Mike Thelen as the leader. We will offer beginners an opportunity to go out with a different leader, John Solodar, to give these people a trip geared to their needs. Both trips start at 8:00 AM from the Hampton Lake parking lot (see below) and will run until about noon at the latest. If you have to leave early that's OK too.

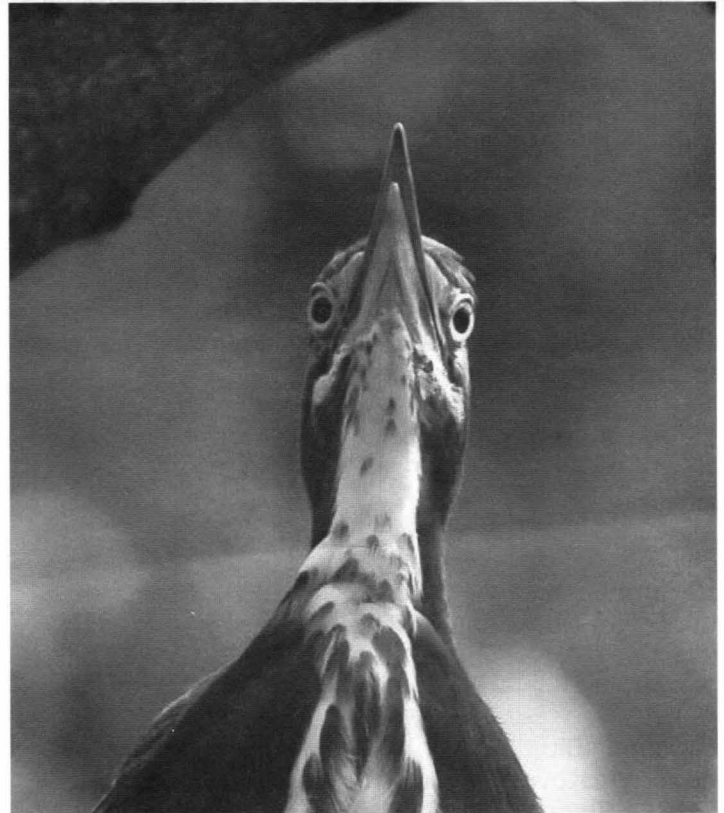
How to get there

Two Rivers NWR- Take Hwy 367 north from I-270 as if going to Riverlands. The designation changes to Hwy 67 just beyond the 4th traffic light, but continue straight ahead. Hwy 67 over the Clark Bridge

into Alton IL. Go left on Route 143 at the end of the bridge and left again at the intersection with Route 100. Follow Route 100 upriver through Grafton. Meet in the Gilbert Lake parking lot just north of the Brussels Ferry.

Busch Conservation Area - Take U.S.40/I-64 west into St. Charles County. Take Hwy 94 south from U.S 40 about 1 mile to the traffic light at Hwy D. Turn right and go about 1.5 miles to the entrance on the right. Turn left at the "T" to Hampton Lake and meet in the parking lot.

Horseshoe Lake - Take I-70 east across Poplar Street ridge. Exit at Highway 111 (exit 6) and turn left. Go north a few miles to the Horseshoe Lake State Park entrance (on left). Meet at the first parking lot on the right.



Green Heron in Forest Park. Photo submitted by Mike Thelen.

Missouri's Scenic Rivers Need You !!

September 08, 2006

Missouri's largest national park, the Ozark National Scenic Riverways (Riverways), needs your help. The National Park Service has begun the process of updating the General Management Plan for the Ozark National Scenic Riverways, encompassing 134 miles of the Current and Jacks Fork Rivers.

The new Plan will guide the NPS in its decisions regarding the Riverways for more than a decade. Please join us in telling the National Park Service that its General Management Plan must restore, recover, and protect this Ozark gem. In recent years, it has become apparent that overuse and lax management have nearly destroyed the high quality outdoor recreation experience the Riverways once provided and have endangered its future.

Charting the Course for the Riverways' Future

The National Park Service is hosting open "scoping" meetings to receive input from people like you before they draft the new Plan. It is imperative that you participate in one of the meetings or send in your comments to ensure that your values are reflected in the final Plan.

The Open Houses will be from 5 - 8 p.m. at locations across Missouri (see schedule) and will include small breakout groups to discuss ideas for addressing challenges associated with planning for the Riverways' future. The groups will begin at 5:30, 6:15 and 6:45. Please sign up for one or more of these breakout group meetings.

Please plan to participate in one or more of the following Scoping Meetings or submit your comments to help preserve an Ozark gem:

9/18 Van Buren, 5-8 p.m.: Van Buren Community Center - Intersection of Business Highway 60 and D Highway.

9/19 Eminence, 5-8 p.m.: Eminence Elementary School - On State Route 106, 1 mile west of Route 19.

9/20 Poplar Bluff, 5-8 p.m.: Three Rivers Community College, Westover Administration Bldg, Poplar Bluff - Off Three Rivers Drive, 0.3 miles from Hardee's.

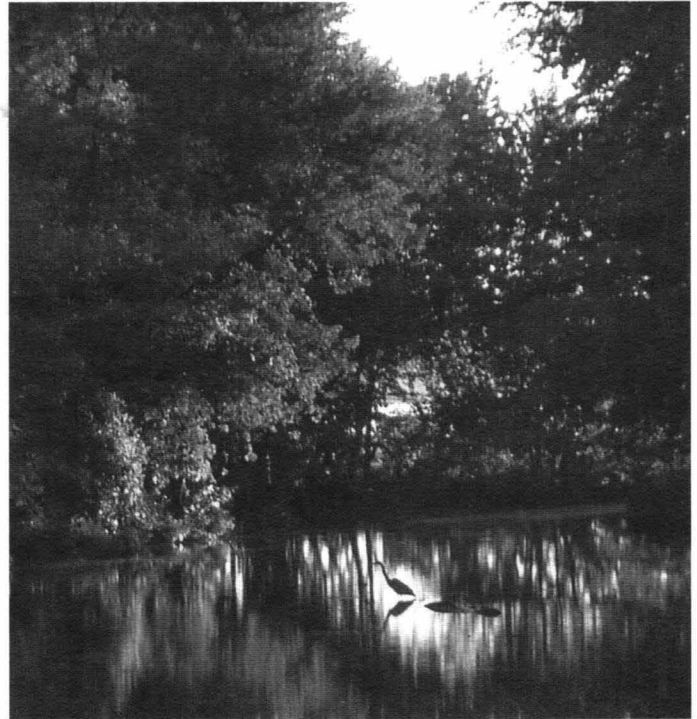


Photo submitted by Pat Lueders.

9/21 Salem, 5-8 p.m.: Salem City Auditorium - 202 North Washington St.

9/22 St. Louis, 5-8 p.m.: Holiday Inn Southwest & Viking Conference Center - 10709 Watson Rd, off I-44 east of I-270.

[You can submit comments directly to the NPS here.](#)

You may also comment on the Plan in writing or at the Park Service website. By mail, send comments to:

Superintendent, Ozark National Scenic Riverways
P.O. Box 490
Van Buren, MO 63965

Editor's Note: Information about these meetings was supplied by Dave Bedan, Audubon Missouri, Conservation Chair. The Audubon Missouri Conservation Committee is comprised of other conservation chairpersons from chapters from around our state, including the St. Louis Chapter. If you would like further information, there is a link on our website to Audubon Missouri.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Torrey Berger

This last month has presented SLAS with opportunities to partner for the benefit of three of our local parks, all of which constitute elements of Important Bird Area ("IBA").

Tower Grove Park. In response to the urgent need precipitated by the horrendous tree damage sustained in Tower Grove Park from this summer's windstorms. Your Board of Directors authorized expenditure of \$2,500 for tree maintenance and replacement in the Park. This amounts to about a dollar per member of SLAS. There is still a lot of work to be done in the Park and a great need for additional financial assistance. If anyone wants to assist with the restoration of this IBA, please send a check payable to Tower Grove Park to:
Tower Grove Park, P. O. Box 15199, 4256 Magnolia Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63110.

Confluence State Park. SLAS has agreed to participate as a partner with the Division of State Parks, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, in a \$20,000 grant application to provide funds for the revegetation and reforestation plan at Confluence State Park. This plan will create much needed habitat at the strategic location of the Missouri/Mississippi confluence for birds using the Mississippi flyway. SLAS's participation will be in kind matching contributions of a value of \$2,500 by providing quarterly bird monitoring and educational services on site.

Forest Park. We are currently working on setting up a program to provide leaders for bird walks in Forest Park, sponsored by Forest Park Forever. Such a program will give us the opportunity to reach a large new audience of potential beginning birders.

We are always finding new opportunities to assist birds and birders. However, usually these opportunities involve such activities as educational programs, leading bird walks or doing bird surveying work. We have a wonderful group of volunteers who provide these services, but we can always, always use more. If you would be interested in getting involved in the interesting and enjoyable activities, please call me at 314-579-9227 to get you started.



Northern Harrier flying at Riverlands last Winter. Photo submitted by Juanita Shore.

What Price the Environment?

by Mitch Leachman

It's election season again in America and we're inundated with commercials, campaign signs and interviews of all sorts. One thing that is quite consistent amongst them is their overall lack of information. Even the candidate interviews play like 30 second commercials for the newest breakfast foods—blabbering “vote for me” (i.e., buy me) in countless different ways. I'm not sure there is a mainstream candidate or party that really wants you to think for yourself or develop your own set of priorities. So, here's a switch. I'm going to present some facts and figures about environmental funding at the federal, state and private levels. In so doing, I hope you assess for yourself what seems right and perhaps even come up with some hard questions for your elected officials seeking office.

First, let's look at the Federal Budget, according to the 2007 Budget Request, as disclosed by the OMB at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2007/budget.html>.

Total environmental funding amounts to \$23.4 billion, or just 2.3% of discretionary spending.

Obviously, the number would be much smaller if I compared to the total budget. In contrast, the DoD receives 49% and a single, somewhat narrowly focused agency like NASA receives 1.6%. Do not confuse this last agency with NOAA, a part of the Commerce Department, and the agency responsible for the Weather Service.

So, does it make sense for the DoD to receive over 20 times more funding than the environment? Is not a healthy environment as important as being secure? Do we really want one without the other? It's not as if the environment is “fully funded.” Consider pollution that creates acid rain, endangered species without recovery plans, critical ecosystems like coral reefs, wetlands, etc. that continue to be degraded and, of course, there is global warming. What will the Earth look like when I am 80 and there are 10 billion people? What will my grandchildren inherit and will there still be clean air and water and wonderful, natural places to experience?

Further, according to the OMB's own figures, there were just four major agencies that had a decrease in discretionary budget authority from 2001

to 2007—EPA, Interior, Labor and Transportation. The total reduction was \$3.1 billion and averaged over 6%. This while total Federal discretionary spending increased over the same period by 35% or nearly \$227 billion. Is the environment less important than it was in 2001? Does it make sense to increase support for our health and education, if the environment is not included? I'm all for smaller government, but I've never felt we were spending too much on the environment.

You might be thinking, “What about state funding?” It can be significant, for sure. In Missouri, the 2007 request for the Conservation Department totaled \$142 million with another \$324 million for the Department of Natural Resources. By comparison, the state of California's 2006-2007 enacted budget included \$5.4 billion for environmental protection and natural resources (on a total budget of \$131 billion). Like many services our society depends upon, there is financial commitment from both the federal and state levels. Yet, a rather liberal assumption of \$700 million in funding per state yields another \$35 billion for the environment—a total of \$58 billion from federal and state, or slightly more than the Labor Department's \$53 billion for 2007. Is that enough?

Finally, a few quick comments about private environmental funding. The table summarizes funding documents located on the three organizations' websites. Certainly there are many other groups I could have listed, but these are three of the largest. Yet, note their total revenues are just \$1.3 billion—far below federal or state levels. Also note the high level of their revenue that comes from contributions—voluntary support from individuals or corporations that believe that the environmental mission of these organizations is not being satisfied by government funding. Why is that? Is the permanent protection of critical habitat that is a focus of the Nature Conservancy not important? Why is there such a need for the private funding of migratory waterfowl recovery and sustainment that Ducks Unlimited provides? I wonder what the Federal Budget would have to look like for

organizations like these to run out of things to do.

I do not pretend this is a "scientific study," or that I have not made some very gross assumptions. However, I am confident the overall relation of financial support would not change regardless of how much data was gathered, and that is the ultimate question. Do you believe the environment is fully funded? Are you satisfied that the air you breathe, the water you drink and the outdoors you love are fully protected and secure? If like me, you are disturbed by the "lip service" all candidates give to our natural heritage, demand more. More wilderness areas, more endangered species on the road to recovery, less pollution, more wetlands protected, less beach erosion and on and on. Do not give up and do not be satisfied until the environment is the first priority for all campaigns. Tell all the candidates you have an opinion and you want to be heard.

New Series of mid-week birding trips debuts in October

John Solodar

St. Louis Audubon Society is inaugurating a new series of mid-week birding trips on October 25. We are testing the waters with four trips this season in order to gauge the interest of the birding community. Birders of all levels are invited, including beginners, and there is no cost. You do not even have to be a member of SLAS to attend.

Pat Lueders will lead our first trip in this series and it will cover the Busch Conservation Area. and then flow out to the overall Weldon Spring area, probably including the Katy Trail access. A wide variety of birds should be present including wintering birds, especially the sparrows, some late migrants and probably some water birds as well.

Meet at the Hampton Lake parking lot at 8:00 AM. To get there take U.S.40/I-64 west into St. Charles County.

Take Hwy 94 south from U.S 40 about 1 mile to the traffic light at Hwy D. Turn right and go about 1.5 miles to the entrance on the right. Turn left at the "T" to Hampton Lake and meet in the parking lot.

Tale Feathers

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St. Louis Audubon Society 2006 - 2007

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Chapter Only Membership Application**

Note: To receive the National Audubon Magazine,
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**Your membership dues will go directly to the St. Louis Audubon Society.
Your membership dues support local issues that are important to you,
programs at our general meetings, and *Tale Feathers*, our newsletter.**

Dues are \$15 per year and cover all members living at the same address.

Please complete the form, enclose a check payable to SLAS, and mail to:
St. Louis Audubon Society, P.O. Box 220227, Kirkwood, Mo. 63122.

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